

# SOME NOTES UPON THE CRAFT GUILDS OF NORWICH, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE MASONS.

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THE existing custumal of the City of Norwich is unfortunately only a transcript of the original, which probably dated from the 13th century. It was contained in a manuscript belonging to the Corporation, known in Blomefield's, the county historian's day, as the "Book of Customs," and is now missing. The copy preserved is very corrupt and often impossible to translate from the Latin, in which it stands, unless suitable words are supplied. The 46th Chapter "Concerning practising & searching Occupations" may be abridged thus: "To ensure the avoidance of fraudulent or faulty work, let the Bailiffs and Twenty-Four elected in common choose yearly two, three, or four of each craft (according to its size) and other experts. Those elected are to be sworn to visit at least four times a year every craft & industry and faithfully present every default to the Bailiffs & Twenty-Four elected in the name of the Commonalty, who shall exact sufficient amends and shall also have power to remove any of the sworn searchers who are negligent."

The mention of the Bailiffs clearly shows that this document is anterior to the Mayoralty, which began in 1404. But up to 1440 we have no names of the wardens, and the lists are very imperfect previous to the 16th century.

In 1415, after much disputing between the citizens and their officers, a composition was made dealing with the whole government of the city. It concludes with orders for the crafts and general trading.<sup>1</sup> One item has it "That alle Craftes that wille be cladde shall be cladde after the form of London." Another that crafts may elect their own wardens and then present them to the Mayor.

Next in a parchment book, called the "Liber Albus," which was commenced in 1426, and owes its existence to the composition just referred to, or to the immediate consequences, there is a lengthy entry styled "Ordinances for Crafts." Henry VI. is named as the reigning Sovereign, but no year is given. However there is a note appended to an abbreviated copy in the Mercers' Books, which seems to imply that it was compiled in 1450. It treats of the election of officers in large and small crafts and their duties, the clothing, and ridings; then of foreigners, change of craft, apprentices, and religious observances. The compilers have taken some trouble to explain what is to be understood by a mystery, viz., *parcell of craftis and cleped mysteris for as moche as there is not at this day sufficient noubre of persons in the said mysteris to be cleped a craft. Again, Every mystery shall be uned to his like craft, that is to wyte, to Smiths' craftes thies mysterys, Bladsmys, Locksmys, and Lorymers [bridlesmiths]; and to every craft to have his mysterys assigned unto it.* It seems probable, judging from the Mercers' Book above mentioned, that copies of this order were delivered to every craft guild.

These ordinances are immediately followed in the book by others, dated 1543, of which there will be occasion to speak when we come to that period.

<sup>1</sup> Printed in the "Town Close Evidences" f. 37 et seq.



Some regulations dealing exclusively with the Masons were certainly drawn up in 1469, for the minutes of the assembly for that year state, that the aldermen and common council should attend upon the Mayor to reform divers things for a long time used by the masons to the dishonour of their craft, according to the effect of a certain bill presented by divers men of the same craft. What these regulations were cannot now be discovered. Doubtless they were entered in the books of the Masons' Guild, but these and also those of practically every other trade company of Norwich are now missing, although Blomefield appears to have seen some of them. The Mercers' Book, of which mention has been made, is only an account of the presentments of defects.

The masons again attracted the attention of the assembly in 1491, when it appears that no masters were sworn to make any search for defects of workmanship, and it is stated that by a recent statute masons were merely accounted labourers, and forbidden to call any gathering for forming regulations upon such defects. Therefore it was agreed, that the mayor, with two of the more discreet men of the craft, should have authority to correct such defects, assess fines, and so forth.<sup>1</sup> What statute is here understood is uncertain, but probably an Act of Parliament for it was unusual to call the local enactments by that name.

Feast-bearing will next claim our notice. It was the custom of the guilds to elect two or more of the members every year to provide a feast on the guild day; and although these persons were in part remunerated by each brother's fixed payment for his food and drink, it is evident, that at this time, the expenses of the feast-bearers were becoming insupportable. Accordingly it was enacted in 1494, that all should contribute equally, the feast-makers paying no more than others, except that their trouble should be gratuitous, and whoever did the contrary should forfeit 20s. It appears that this order had not the desired effect, for the next year we hear that the burden causes great undoing and impoverishment of the feast-makers, and many desert the city, while others refuse to come in, in order to avoid this expense, so that, as usual, the city is much decayed and likely to be brought to utter ruin. So quite a number of orders were made to remedy the evil, among which we again find that the cost of the feast shall be borne by all, and no one is to be compelled to be a brother of a guild unless he be of value. It was nevertheless necessary to renew this Act in 1531.

There still exists a roll of Apprenticeship Indentures, beginning in 1512, and from this date we may be sure that at one time the enrolments were complete, though at present several are missing. This roll was undoubtedly made in pursuance of an act of an assembly, held on the 19th of March in that year. The first skin is chiefly taken up with mason apprentices, and almost, if not quite, all the remainder are worsted-weavers, but nothing has been noticed in it which calls for particular comment. Previous to this date there are only one or two indentures, enrolled in 1417, known, a remarkable fact, since the composition of 1415, and the ordinances which have been assigned to the year 1450, both insisted upon enrolment, however it is just possible that others may be found in the voluminous court rolls, which have not hitherto been carefully examined. On the other hand, there can be little doubt that the obligation was frequently avoided.

<sup>1</sup> Similar powers were given to the reoders.



In the autumn of this year, 1512, we find the rough-masons complaining that many persons, after having been apprenticed to their craft for seven years, have redeemed their bonds after four years or even less, while others using the craft have never been apprenticed at all, so that many works done by them in the city are in decay, to the great rebuke of the occupation. It was thereupon decreed, that no one should work as a rough-mason but such as had fully served his apprenticeship, or else be approved by the Mayor and the Wardens of the craft. Also that no one should take it upon him to do any task work within the city, but such as were sworn citizens.

The assembly was next called upon to deal with the matter of pageants. As previously stated the ordinances of 1450 contain certain regulations for ridings, mentioning the Mayor's riding, on the day when he assumed his office, and processions at Hallowmas, Christmas, and Twelfthday, or at other times to be assigned by the Mayor. On these occasions the craft, to which the Mayor belonged, followed immediately behind him. For other crafts, the engrossing clerk states that their order will be found in the same book as the ordinances. It is certainly not there now, and it may be questioned whether it ever was, but it may be preserved in some parchment folios at the end of an otherwise paper book, known as the "Old Free Book." It is there spoken of as the order of the procession on Corpus Christi Day to the Chapel in the Fields, each craft with its banner. The handwriting is very similar to that of the ordinances, and the list might have been made a few years before or after 1450. That it was anterior to the Reformation is evident, and it must be mentioned that the seventh place is assigned to the masons.

This list is in a manner collated with another in a later hand, and seems to be an abridgment of an order for processions, made soon after the Reformation, which will be mentioned shortly. It begins *i Smethes*, *ii Masons*, but both these crafts united with others really formed one group or company.<sup>1</sup>

The pageant proper was a far more elaborate and picturesque entertainment, and at an earlier period was exhibited by St. Luke's Guild; that is to say a guild composed of the pewterers, braziers, bell-founders, plumbers, glasers, and painters alone. In 1527 this guild handed a petition<sup>2</sup> to the Mayor, requesting, that being impoverished by producing the annual spectacle on Whit-Monday, it may be enacted that every occupation within the city shall, for the future, set forth one pageant on the day mentioned. This was apparently granted, for there is extant a description of this show, where the particular pageant allotted to each group of crafts is named. The masons, united with several other companies, have the fourth place and it was their joint duty to represent *Abell & Cain*. It should be noticed that this is the sole instance where the masons are separated from the smiths in any ceremony not being merely a matter of trade.

In 1539, owing doubtless to the general insecurity felt by reason of the King's action respecting the monasteries, it was enacted, that all guild stocks of such guilds, as were already dissolved, and in future should be dissolved, should be given to the Mayor to be expended on the ruinous decay of the city: and the next day John Rochester is assigned to pay to Mr. Mayor 25s. which remain in his hands of the guild of St. Olave. In the same year the Chamberlains account for 22s. 8d. received of

<sup>1</sup> Blomefield's statements concerning the procession on Corpus Christi day in 1489 cannot now be verified.

<sup>2</sup> This petition, and also the order of processions and pageants, are published in *Norfolk Archaeology* vol. iii., p. 3, et seq.



divers guild stocks, and in the next Robert Thorp, priest, surrendered 10s. as the remaining stock of the thick-woollen-weavers' guild. A further order was made in 1548, that is immediately after the suppression of guilds and fraternities, that all guild stocks should be employed towards cleansing the River.

We now come to the New Ordinances for Crafts which were issued in 1543 as already stated. They are very extensive and it would be impossible to give even a summary of their contents in an article like the present. Three years previously the city had obtained a grant of the church of the Black Fryers from the king, and now, the necessary alterations being completed, it was resolved to use it as a Common Hall, instead of the College of St. Mary, where large gatherings had hitherto assembled. Therefore, in the first place, there is a long account of the religious ceremonies and feastings, which, excepting that the worsted-weavers shall attend masse at the Cathedral, are all to be held in the Hall, the masse being sung in the chapel of St. John there. Days were assigned to the crafts, either separately or grouped into companies, for keeping their guild. To the masons with tilers, lime-burners, and smiths, the 5th Sunday after Trinity was given, and since the first day, allotted to a craft, was the Thursday before Whit-Sunday, and then every Sunday after that Thursday, for twelve consecutive weeks, to another of the various crafts or companies, it follows that the masons again occupied the seventh place.

The existing rules concerning feast-bearing were apparently abolished, for it was now ordered, that no one should keep open shop within the city for a longer period than two years and a day, unless he be then admitted a brother of a fraternity; and no one was to be elected feast-bearer within two years after he had been admitted, then, if he refused to take the trouble and expense, he would be fined 20s.

Every member of a fraternity is to contribute 1d. quarterly towards the fund for relief of the almsmen of the brotherhood, and a like amount at the burial of every brother or sister; the sum to be expended, in wax [for candles], offerings at the altar, and deeds of charity; the sick moreover are to be visited.

The by-laws for apprentices and enrolment of their indentures are re-enacted, and lastly, the sum of 1d. is to be paid by every member of every fraternity, on the guild day, to the priest of the Chapel of St. John, who sang for the prosperity of the brethren that are alive, and the souls of those departed, and so on. That is all very well, but one cannot help being surprised to find, in the sordid Chamberlains' Accounts, that the priest is handing over these contributions to the use of the city in general. The first entry of the kind occurs in the accounts for the previous year, where only the lump sum of 68s. 5d. is mentioned. But immediately after the passing of the ordinances, the offerings of every guild are severally given, and the totals are almost double the above sum. In 1544 the offerings of the Masons and Smiths, with their companies, amounted to 3s. 5d., and they also paid 4s. 4d. for the certen. This last was the normal amount contributed by the guilds for that purpose, yet since the certen is described in the ordinances, as a yearly stipend to be paid to the priest, the charge strikes one as being a little illusory. However seeing that the priest was paid a salary of £6 13s. 4d. it appears at first sight that he gained rather than lost by this duplicity, and it would be so, if his sole duties had consisted in saying masses for the guilds, but that is highly improbable.

The following exceptional entry also occurs in the Chamberlains' Accounts at this time, *Paid for the chargis of the clerks that sange Masse and evensong for the Smythes*



and *Masons the Sunday before Mydsomer.* *xxl.* This was in 1543, when the 5th Sunday after Trinity fell upon Midsummer Day, and no similar statement has been found under any other year, or naming any other company, so that the reference is obscure.

This constant coupling of the Masons and Smiths raises the question, whether the Masons were actually members of the Guild of St. Loe or Eligius, to whom the Smiths' guild was certainly dedicated, and which was sometime kept in the existing Church of All Saints. No satisfactory evidence is forthcoming, and nothing that has been said amounts to a proof of it, yet it is strange that there was a leading family of Masons called Smyth, while there is some reason to suspect that their real name was Dewe.

At this time too the order and route to the processions on Corpus Christi Day were rearranged. St. Mary's College was on the verge of dissolution, and so the progress is from and back to the Common Hall. In the order of the companies, the smiths, tilers, masons, and lime-burners with their two banners marched first, and were it worth while it could easily be proved that the list previously alluded to as beginning, *i Smethes*, *ii Masons*, is only an enumeration of those crafts which possessed banners picked out from this mandate, the existing heading being allowed to remain.

In 1546, and also in 1547, when the destruction of the guilds was imminent, the pageants were prohibited, and in the last instance the Minutes of the Assembly give a significant hint that the order was made with a view to preserving the guild stocks intact, so that there might be the more to sieze when the final crash should come. It came the next year, and as we have seen, stocks were to be expended in cleansing the river, the amount received has not been found recorded anywhere, and the Chamberlains' account states, *received for the offryngs and certens of any Guylds kept within the tyme of thys accompt, nothyng, for that they be all lest and putt down.* This can only mean that the offerings, with the masses, and prayers for the dead, as also the deeds of charity were ended; the crafts remained as societies, responsible for securing good work, and possibly something more. For in the ordinances last mentioned we constantly find that the work "guild" has been altered to "feast" or "fellowship," as the construction requires, and "masse" to "service." What other period than this can be assigned for these changes? And if all feasting and worship had been put down, why were they made? The priest continued to draw his salary, and the pageants were proceeding in Elizabeth's reign,<sup>1</sup> so making allowance for change of ideas, things appear to have gone on pretty much as before.

The *Guilds* or *Fraternities* became *Artificers of Occupations* in 1549, when the carpenters, masons and other architectural trades complain that they are compelled to employ foreigners and young beginners, because the more experienced hands go out of the city, when they are most required there, and obtain work in the country. To prevent such action in future, except by license of the Mayor, heavy penalties were prescribed.

During the reign of Elizabeth by-laws for the crafts were issued severally, those for the *Fellowship and Company of Masons* occur under the year 1572, they include the rules for the lime-burners, and relate exclusively to the avocation, without mention of festivities.

<sup>1</sup> See Norfolk Archaeology, vol. v., p. 29.



Some revision of these was necessary about five years later, when it was allowed that an apprentice might be employed as a common labourer during the first year of his service. As a consequence of these orders eighteen Masons, rough-masons, and lime-burners were presented at the Mayor's Court held on 22nd November, 1592, for offences against them and various fines were inflicted.

A set of by-laws were also produced in the next reign, and though none for the Masons have been discovered, it is possible that they were engrossed in one of the books now lost. Again at the close of the 17th century a further series was compiled, and entered in a book kept solely for this purpose, in which the rules for the Masons are contained under the date, 1684.

At the time of which we are speaking the lists of the wardens of crafts were discontinued, although only sixty years previously the number of recognised trades had been vastly increased. The wardens continued to be appointed however, and their names can be picked up from the records of the Mayor's Court. They become fewer and fewer in the course of years, and appear to end entirely about the middle of the 18th century.

#### NORWICH CORPORATION ARCHIVES.

Wardens of the Masons elected in 1440;—John Everard, & John Dyncok.

Assembly Thursday after St Matthew, 4<sup>th</sup> Hen. VIII. 1512.

This day is read a certain bill exhibited by the Masters of the craft of Rough-masons in these words To right worchepfull Maieur, aldermen and comon-counsail of the Citie of Norwich sheweth to your honorable Weysdoms the Wardeyns of the rough Masons within the said Citie that not only diverse and many persons dwellyng within this Citie in the occupacion and Myster of Roughmasons have be bounde apprentice for vij yeres and divers and many of them have by ther Frenedes have redeemed ther bondes of apprentishode some att ij yeres iij yeres and iiij yeres so that they have nott served ther hole terme accordyng to the ordynaunces made within the said Citie and some of them never wer apprentices nor used the same occupacion and cannott worke and fere nott to take taskē workes by meane of which premisses diverse and many workes within the said Citie wrought by them ben in decay to the greatt hurt of bylders and rebuke of the said occupacion. May it please your good Mastershypps therefor to enacte ordayne and establysse by auctoryties to you yeven for remedies in such cases that from hensforth no man shall take upon hym to worke in the occupacion of Roughmasons craft within the said Citie butt such as have ben apprentices within the said Citie and fully served his apprentishode by vij yeres att the lest or elles to be approved and admytted by the Maieur of the said Citie for the tyme beyng and the Wardens of the same craft for the tyme beyng. And also that non of the said occupacion shall take uppon hym to make any taskē work within the said Citie but such as ben Citezens Sworn within the same Citie And if any man presume to do the contrary of any of the premysses to be commytted to warde by the said Maieur and over that to make fyne after the quantitie of his trespas thone halff of hit to the Maieur for the tyme beyng and thother halff to hym or them that certyfyeth and proveth any of the said defautes.

Which bill being read and understood by the whole assembly aforesaid it is agreed that it be established and enacted by the aforesaid authority according to the form and effect of the same.



Assembly 31<sup>st</sup> May 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. VI. 1549.

Also that a booke concerning the absence & departyng oute of the Citie without licence of the Mayer of Carpenters Reders Masons & Tylers is enacted & ordered as is conteyned in the same; Wherof the tenour foloweth in these wordes. Forasmuche as thenhabitaunts & Citezens of this Citie beyng artificers of the mysteryes sciens & occupacions of masonscraft of knowne & reputed & called by the name of Roughemasons briklayers & Fremasons Reders Carpenters & Tylerscraft inhabityng withinne this Citie have hadde ther lernyng & educacion by the most commendable maner of apprentices of these sciens and by that meane atteyned there severall occupacions & hath exercised ther sciens within the same to & ffor the goode encrease & mayntenance of ther lyvyngs famileyes & households, and therby also the Citezens & inhabitaunts ther the better served & ther edifiengs repayred & maynteyned to the greate comforte of the comons within the same Citie. Which thing of late dayes hath ben so enffrenge & disordered by dyvers & sondry persons of theise mysteryes of masons tylers Reders & Carpenterscraft having only a respecte to ther own pryvate luke & advauntage to be comen & growen to be perfecte & goode workmen gretlye necleyng ther commodities here with in this Citie have departed oute of the same Citie at suche tymes & seasons in the yeere as thei most called upon & loked ffor to be sette on worke into dyvers partes & places of the cuntryth & more Reddy to serve estraungers then the comons here contrary to the goode orders here toffore had & used within the seid Citie. By reson wherof the inhabitaunts & Citezens here hath been compelled to take & sette into ther worke aswell Foreincrs as also yong begynners of those sciens whose worke ffor lak of good & sufficient knowlege & workemanshipp in the same have decayed or ellys lest on doyng or on don to the grette detryment of the seid Citie and also hinderance & losse of the comons of the same ffor reformation whereof & to thentente that the Citie & comons of the same may bee the better served and mayned (sic) ffrom hensforth by suche persons as do use & exercise the same sciens & occupacions beforenamed & soo sate in good & civile order mete & necessary to be hadde used & maynteyned & contynued with in this Citie. Be it therfor ordered and also enacted and establysshed by the Mayor Shereffes Citezeins & Commonaltie of this Citie assembled togeder with oone hooll assente and by vertue & auctorytie of the same that iff any maner of person or persons whatsoever he or they be Citezens and inhabitaunts within this Citie Suburbes & hamelettes of the same shall ffrom the ffeste of Middsomer next commyng beyng of the mysteryes sciens & occupacions of Masons crafte Tylers Reders & Carpenters that is to saye Roughemasons Fremasons or breklayers Tylers Reders & Carpenters shall by ther own meanes or deputies or servaunts take any worke in hande or make eny covenante with eny other person or persons ffor the same dwellyng or inhabiting out of this Citie in any place or parte of the Countreyth ffor any maner of worke to be done made sette uppe or ffenysshed there without licence of the Mayor of this Citie or his successours Mayors ffor the tyme beyng & Aldermen or the more parte of them assembled & be thereupon ffully agreed to be by the seid artificer or artificers of masons Tylers Reders & Carpenters or eny of them in the Counsell Chamber of the seid Citie, then hee to fforfeyte & lose ffor the ffirste tyme of the offence commytted & done contrary to the tenour fforme & effecte herof Tenne Shillinges and ffor the Seconde deffawte twenty Shillinges and ffor the thirde ffawte fferty Shillinges and to be clerly disfraunchesed ffrom all the libertie of the Citie. The whiche sommes of money so lost &c to be equally dyvyded the oone halff to the Mayer to the use of the seid Citie And the other halff



to hym or them that present & Sue ffor the same. And the money to be levied by discrecion distres or by emprisonment of the partie offender as shall seme beste by the discrecion of the Mayer & his brethern the Aldermen or the more parte of them.

Assembly 30 Sept<sup>r</sup> 7. H. 7. 1491. [Extended.]

Hac die motum est per Maiorem de Arte Lathamorum in hac Ciuitate eo quod nulli magistri Artis illius sunt iurati ad faciendum aliquod scrutinium pro defectibus eorundem Lathamorum et quis habebit superuisum defectum alicuius conquerentis (conquerent') et pro eo quod per statutum nuper inde editum Lathamii reputantur & acceptantur nisi tamen ut laboratores et per eundem statutum prohibetum est eis facere aliquas conuenticulas, siue congregaciones inter se ad faciendas aliquas actus siue ordinaciones pro correccione alicuius delinquentis. Modo ad hanc congregacionem concordatum & agreeatum est quod Maiore pro tempore existente conuocatis sibi duabus de magis discrecionibus Lathamorum infra hanc Ciuitatem habeant plenam auctoritatem et correccionem de quibus libet Lathamis in opere suo delinquentibus & fines super eos ponere et emendas conquerenti facere per eorum discreciones prout eis bene deceat.

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# EXTRACTS FROM THE RECORDS OF THE CORPORATION OF NORWICH.

COMMUNICATED BY WALTER RYE, ESQ.

## ASSEMBLY BOOK: NORWICH CORPORATION: VOL. III.

Congregaço teut. die vidz: xxiiij<sup>o</sup> die deccembr. Anno regni dnē Elizabeth regine nunc xv coram Robto Sackeling maiore Nich Sootherton et Francisco Rugge vic.

This daye the booke that the Masons have prefarrd to this assembly ys fully agreid upon to be stablyshed as a lawe and to take effecte according to the tenure of the same booke as hereafter in this assembly may appeare.

To the right Worshippfull M<sup>r</sup> Maior the Shreves aldermen and comon counsell of the cittie of Norw<sup>ch</sup>.

Humbly shewing unto yo<sup>r</sup> worshippes your continually orators the ffellowshipp and companye of Masons w<sup>thin</sup> this Cittie that wheareby the good goverment of the Magistrates of thys Cittie & the good obediens of the Cittizens & Cominalty of the same w<sup>ch</sup> long tyme heretofore have ben used had and diligently observed in all estates and degrees of this Corporacion, every member of this cittye that is to saye every company of arts & mysteris w<sup>thin</sup> the same have prosperously increased and polytikly ben maynteyned to the greate profitt of this comon welth all w<sup>ch</sup> have ben done & contynued by the good ordinances & civill constitucōs w<sup>ch</sup> from tyme to tyme w<sup>th</sup> good discrecion and deliberat advice have ben made and ordiened amongst the w<sup>ch</sup> we yo<sup>r</sup> oratours have amongst others tasted of the benefit thereof, but for somochas in processe of tyme manye defaults and abuses do happen, w<sup>ch</sup> have nede of dewe reformacōn and o<sup>r</sup> arte or occupaçon ys very necessary and one emongest others most occupied in this comonwelth & yet no certen order preseryved and lymytted for good and perfect workemanshipp nor no dewe ponishment for offences set downe and appoynted by reason wheareof ther is moche evill and sleyty workemanshipp to the greate losse of souche as set men or worke and to y<sup>e</sup> greate slander and infamy of good woorkmen w<sup>ch</sup> greatly nedith great reformacion for the avoydaunce gret inconvenyences w<sup>th</sup> otherwise in defalte thereof might thereupon ensue, the premisses therefore considered It maye please yo<sup>r</sup> worshippes that it maye be ordeyned by this comon assembly that all the hole companye of masons nowe being inhabitant and hereafter to be inhabiting or sojorning in this Cittie or the suburbs of the same shalbe obedient and observe the orders rules & articles hereafter writing w<sup>ch</sup> your orators do trust shall bring gret confirmite amongst them and shall maynteyne good workemanshipp and abbolishe all deceite and sleytynes in o<sup>r</sup> seid arte or occupaçon wheareby shall insue grete benefit unto this cittie & the inhabytants of the same and we shall ever be bownde to prey to God for yo<sup>r</sup> prosperous estate longe to contynue.

Imprimis that the wardens and hedemen of the sayd company of Masons shall yearly and every yeare for ever hereafter w<sup>thin</sup> one moneth after that M<sup>r</sup> Maior do take his charge cause all the hole companye of masons to assemble and met together at some convenient place and then and ther the two wardens and hedemen to chose out of the same company xij persons w<sup>ch</sup> xij persons so elected shall elect too new wardens for the same occupaçon and on hedeman of the wysest metest and most discret persons of the



same company for the yeare ffollowing w<sup>ch</sup> shalbe sworne to exercise ther offices duly and truly for the yeare ffollowing as is accustomed w<sup>th</sup> in the seid Cittie and yf y<sup>e</sup> wardens thall herein neglecte and make defalte in doyng of ther offices then y<sup>e</sup>che of them to fforfeyte x<sup>s</sup>.

Item that the wardens of the same occupation from tyme to tyme shall have full power to Somon xij xj x jx or viij persons of the same occupaçon to come and be sworne before the maior for the tyme being as oft as the seid wardens shall se causes necessary w<sup>ch</sup> seyde xij xj x ix or viij persons shall have auctoryte to serche inquire and present all ffaults comytted by eny of the sayd occupaçon and to assesse suche fynes upōn the same as shall seeme good to ther discrecion provided alwey that Mr. Maior for the tyme being shall or maye augment or dymynishe the same according to the quantite of the defect of the fact

Item that the sayd xij persons w<sup>ch</sup> shalbe elected to chose newe wardens shall yearely also at the elecion of the sayd new wardens elect and chose a bedell to serve the said wardens and compayne who shall delygently and truly do his office in every thing that belongeth thereunto as hathe ben heretofore accustomed upon payne to fforfeite for every offens xvj<sup>d</sup>

Item that yf eny of the said Company shalbe lawfully somoned & warned by the sayd bedell to cum to eny assembly of the said occupaçon and w<sup>th</sup>out resonable cawse do absent hym or elles comyng to the sayd assembly do ther obstinately or frowardly behave hymself or shall depart thens w<sup>th</sup>out lycens or shall brawle or quarell there w<sup>th</sup> eny of the seid company or shall maliciously or slanderously defame eny of the same compayne or be disobedyent to the wardens or shall not orderly behave hymself towarde the sayd wardens and hedeman shall fforfeyt for every defalt iij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup>

Item yf eny person w<sup>ch</sup> shalbe so elected to be wardens or hedeman or to be elected serchers or presentors as ys aforesayd shall refuse to do ther office or dewty according to the trew meanyng of thes consticions and orders or wyll not ffynde souche defaults as shall be proved unto them for the tyme beyng that then every person so offending shall forfeite xx<sup>s</sup>.

Item that no person w<sup>ch</sup> was a workeman at the making of the Statute of Laborers and apprentices or w<sup>ch</sup> have served as an apprentice in the said arte according to the forme of the said Statute shall take upon hym eny taske worke nor take eny apprentyce nor lerne eny person his occupaçon for money or retheyne eny Journey man w<sup>th</sup> in the Liberties of the same Cittie untill he be admytted a freman of the same Cittie & be accepted and admitted a workeman into the company of the same by the wardens & hedeman of the same occupaçon & do pay for his admittance to the said wardens & hedeman iij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup> upon payne to forfeite for every offens iij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup> provided alwey that yf the wardens & hedeman do refuse w<sup>th</sup>out lawfully (*sic*) cause to accept & admytt into ther ffellowshipp eny souche as shalbe fremen of the said Cittie w<sup>ch</sup> have served according to the forme of the sayd Statute being workemen That then the same shalbe at the discrecion of Mr. Maior to admyt or disallow hym.

Item y<sup>t</sup> non of the same company shall set eny of his apprentices to be a troweller before he hathe served one hole yeare at the least nor yet permit or suffer eny apprentice or Journeyman w<sup>ch</sup> be not expert in the sayd occupaçon to make or mend



any worke except his seyd M<sup>r</sup> do oversee the same to be well and perfittly don as it ought to be don upon payn to forfeyt for any offens . . . v<sup>s</sup>.

Itm that every one of the same Companye w<sup>ch</sup> shall take upon them any worke to be don shall do the same well and sufficiently upon payne to forfeyt souch fyne as the said xij xj x ix or viij persons shall assesse for the same.

Itm that every person of the same company Taking worke uppon hym as a M<sup>r</sup> workeman shall duly oversee comande & charge his or ther laborers to make worke and laboure ther mortar well and sufficiently and shall not take to his laborer other then souche as shalbe able to do his dewtye in the suffycient working and making of mortar upon payne of x<sup>s</sup> to be levied upon every souche M<sup>r</sup> owner as shall either by him self or his servant allowe any souche insufficient Laborer and shall not occupye any other sand then roughe sande for outward worke flotyng worke & souche lyke excepted upon payn to forfeit for every defalte . . . xij<sup>d</sup>.

Itm that every laborer w<sup>ch</sup> shalbe set a werke by any of the same occupaçon shall at his M<sup>rs</sup> comaundment make his mortar well & substancially as yt ought to be upon payne to forfeit for every combe of lyme insufficiently made in mortar . . . iiij<sup>d</sup>.

Itm that the Lymeburners w<sup>ch</sup>in the libertye of the Cittye of Norwich shall burne the lyme well and sufficiently in all poynts and shalbe under the serche and presentment of the seyd xij xj x ix or viij persons of Masons & of the wardens of the seyd company of Masons & shalbe ponished for every defalte found and presented by the said xij x ix or viij persons or wardens according to the orders of the said Cittie alredy in that behalf lymytted and yf any of them shall deny any souche serche then every of them so denieng shall forfeyte for every default xij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup>.

Itm that the seyd lymeburners shall deliver ther lyme perfightly brent full measure & shall not refuse to mesure the same yf they be requyred and also shall not sleake the same nor myxt yt before the delivery thereof upon payne to forfeyt for every combe so delivered contrary to the tenor hereof . . . xij<sup>d</sup>.

Itm that all manner of lyme that shall yeld above a peck wast in a seme [? a load] of lyme shalbe denied and taken insufficiently brent & the maker or burner thereof amerciabile for his offens.

Itm that no person of the same occupaçon shall take upon hym to amend any pece of worke w<sup>ch</sup> any other of the same companye have made or begon before (not being well and workemanly don) untill souche tyme as he have made the wardens privy therunto that the offender maye be ponished for his offens upon payn to forfeit vj<sup>s</sup> viij<sup>d</sup>.

Itm that the wardens of the same occupaçon shall have ffre libertie to serche for al manner of defaults made and to [be] made or comytted contrary to this presente ordynauncs & shall have autorite to comaund the forseid xij xj x ix or viij persons at the lest of the said occupaçon to view every souch offens and offences as they shall enfourme the sayd xij xj x ix or viij<sup>te</sup> of, and that the sayd xij or viij persons shall not conceale any defalte but fynd and present the same and make the wardens pryvy of ther proceedings to thend that nothing be overslipped upon payne that every of the said xij or viij<sup>te</sup> persons that shall offend herein to forfeit . . . v<sup>s</sup>.



Itm that non of the fellowship shall take eny newe apprentice before souche tyme as his former apprentice shall have served hym flower yeares of the full ende of his said terme of apprentisshippe upon payne to forfeit for every souche apprentis xx<sup>s</sup>

Itm that no person of the sayd fellowship & ocupacion shall sell over his apprentyce to eny other person onlesse it be to a good and sufficient workeman of the same ocupacion wherunto the wardens of the said ocupacion or the Maier for the tyme being shalbe privy and assenting upon payne to forfeyte . . xl<sup>s</sup> and also that no person of the same companye & ocupacion shall take eny person into his service and under the color of being his servaunt shall lerne hym hys ocupacion for money or eny other composicion to be made betwen them other then souche as have served or shall serve as apprentyce according to the foresayd statute upon payne to forfeite for every souche defaulte . . . xl<sup>s</sup>

Itm that the wardens and hedeman of the seid ocupacion shall ons every quarter of a yeare at the lest or as oft as they shall thynke good make serche for the seid Defaults of souche colerable servaunts and apprentices and yf eny of the sayd ocupacion being thereunto resonably requyred by the said wardens for the better triall of the premisses to show his prentis indenturs towching every souche servaunt or colorable apprentice & do obstinately refuse to shew his seid indentures that then every on so refusing to forfeit x<sup>s</sup> and yf the said wardens and hedeman shall neglect to make souche serche as is aforesayd or shall goo about to conceale eny souche defalte then every of them so offending & duly proved to forfeit . . . x<sup>s</sup>

Itm that no persons of the same ocupacion & fellowship shall make eny covenannt w<sup>th</sup> his apprentyce to gyve hym eny wages or recompence for his worke or suffer hym to worke at his owne hande as a Jorneyman during his apprenticeship but shall in althyngs kepe and use hym according to the Covenannts of his Indentur made betwen the M<sup>r</sup> and souche apprentyce & according to the custome of this cittie upon payne to forfeite for every defalte . . . xx<sup>s</sup>

Itm that no person being a foryner shall worke in the said ocupacion w<sup>th</sup>in the said Cittie w<sup>th</sup>out the lycens of the seyd Wardens and hedeman of the same ocupacion for the tyme being excepte by the lycens of M<sup>r</sup> Maier for the tyme being oneles it be in souche workes as the artificers of the same ocupacion dwelling in the said Cittie cannot artificially make and fynishe upon payne to forfeit for every defalte . . . x<sup>s</sup>

Itm that the wardens of the seid ocupacion shall yearely at ther quarter serches have of every of the said companye and fellowship . . . ij<sup>d</sup> accordinge to the auncient custome in that behalf used toward the paines taking w<sup>ch</sup> yf they will not paie then they to forfeit for every . . . ij<sup>d</sup> not paid . . . vj<sup>d</sup>

Itm that the wardens of the said ocupacion shall at ther going of ther office of wardenshipp yerely accompt to the newe wardens for souche money and stoke as cam to ther handes during the wardenshipp w<sup>ch</sup> ded belong to the sayd companye and fellowship and upon the determinacion of ther accompt shall deliver the surplusage thereof to the new wardens to the use of the seid companye upon payne to forfeit so moche money as they shall have of the seid chattells in ther hands and xx<sup>s</sup> besides.

Itm that no person of the same Company shall procure or intise the servant of any other of the same company to depart from his M<sup>r</sup> without his M<sup>rs</sup> lycens upon to forfeyt for every souche offens . . . . xx<sup>s</sup>



Item that eny lode of sande that shalbe delivered or sold to make mortar w<sup>th</sup> shall conteyn xij barrowes full & every barrowe to conteyn too bussells upon payn that every person shall sell or deliver eny souche lode of sand conteyning eny lesse mesure iiij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup>

Item that no person not being of the same company that is a freman of the same Cittie shall take in hande eny peece of worke w<sup>th</sup>in the said Cittie w<sup>th</sup>out lycens of M<sup>r</sup> Maior & the wardens of the same occupaçon upon payne to forfeite fo[r] every souche peece of worke . . . x<sup>s</sup>.

Item that no person of the same company shall laye eny Smell Brick or semell tyle outewardly in eny worke & so approved and tried by the said xij xj x ix or viij<sup>te</sup> persons upon souche payne as the said xij, xj x ix or viij<sup>te</sup> persons shall assigne and assesse up[on] hym or them for the defaulte.

Item the lymburners and Cariers being under the serche shall paie souche serche as the masons doe according to auncient custome of the seid Cittie.

Item that all fforytūres amerciāments fynes penalties aforeseid other then souche as shalbe forfite by the sayd wardens shalbe levied in forme ffollowing, vidz by distresse to be taken by the said wardens or by the officer of Maior for the tyme being by comytting the party offending to prison untill payment be made, the one halfe thereof to be to the Maior for the tyme being, the other half to the wardens and hedeman of the same occupaçon and all fforytūres of the wardens to be half to M<sup>r</sup> Maior and the other half to the poore people of the same occupacion.

#### ASSEMBLY BOOK: VOL. III., FO. 255.

Congregatio tent die dominico vidz decimo quinto die ffebruarij in ffesto Sancti Mathie Appli anno Regni dñe Eilzabeth dei grā Anglie ffrāuncie et Hibnie Regine fidei defeht &c decimo nono Tempore Thome Layor Maior, Outberti Brereton et ffrancisci Morley Vic.

This daye by the concent of this house it is agreed that the byll w<sup>th</sup> the rough masons have preferred to the assembly shalbe stablyshed and remaine as a lawe w<sup>th</sup> in the Cittie accordinge to the tenure of the said byll as heareafter ensueth.

Whereas a<sup>n</sup> an assembly holden in the guildhall of this Cittie the xxij<sup>the</sup> daye of December in the xv<sup>th</sup> yeare of the reigne of our Sovereine lady Quene Elizabeth, certeine good orders and constituçons were sett downe and ratefied by the coñon assembly as well for the maintenaunce and increase of good workmanshipp emouge the artificers and occupaçon of masons w<sup>th</sup>in this Cittie, as also for the eschewing and utter aboleshinge of sleiteness and evell worke-manshill (*sic*) w<sup>th</sup> before that tyme had ben moche used and practized to the great losse of many and discredit of the occupaçon, And as tyme myxed w<sup>th</sup> experiens hath tryed and proved the moste parte of the same orders and constituçons to be very good and necessary to be put in ure (*sic*? use) and to be contynued and maynteined in this common wealth: Yet amongeste the sayd orders & constituçons, too clawses or articles only be founde by dayly experience nothinge profitable for the coñon wealth of this Cittie, nor for the artificers of the said occupaçon as was hoped for and intended at the makinge of the same orders, but rather greatly hurtful then profitable. Of the whiche one is for that no defalte cann be founde



and presented or punished unlesse it be by the number of Eight persons at the leaste who altogether at ones and one instant tyme do lett ther worke besyds the wardens in whatsoever nedefull worke they be in, or wyth whomesoever they worke, be it for never so smalle a tryfle, wheareby not only the saide artifycers, but also many other, who be owners of the same workes ar therby greatly disapointed and hyndered. The other article or order is that none of the same company shall sett eny of his apprentizes to be a troweler before he hath served one hole yeare at the leaste ne yet permitt or suffer eny apprentys or Jorneyman w<sup>ch</sup> be not expert in the said occupaçon to make or amend eny worke, excepte his said Mr. do overse the same to be well done upon penaltye of ffyve Shillings for every defaulte. And for that aswell the sayd first resyted article whereby eight persons of that occupaçon at the leaste were appointed to finde and present defaults is thought very troublesome and greatly to the losse of poore men to have so many at one tyme to loose there workes and disapoint ther M<sup>rs</sup> w<sup>th</sup> whome they worke, and also this Second article altogether unreasonable for that a prentys that is bound to the said occupaçon shall not be suffered to worke in his said occupaçon the first yeare wheareby he shoulde be the better experiensed in the same mystery, and the sooner able to do his master service, besyds the penaltie of ffyve shillings contained in the latter part of the same article, for every defalte w<sup>thout</sup> havinge rēspēcte to the greatnes or smallnes of the faulte: The sayd twoo articles by whole concent of the Mayor, Shreves, Cittizens and Coñonaltie at this present assemblyd and by auctorytye of the same assemblye ar clearly repelled, adnichilated, frustrated and made voide, And in the steadd of them by aucthoritye of the same assembly it is enacted and agreed on as hereafter ensueth That the wardens and artificers of the Sciens and occupaçon of masons w<sup>th</sup>in the Cittie of Norw<sup>ch</sup> shall yearely electe and chose thre experte mēn of the same occupaçon of masons, who shalbe sworne to fynde and present w<sup>th</sup> the wardens for tyme beinge all maner of defaults of the same occupaçon from tyme to tyme, And that all falts founde and presented and all fynes and amercyaments sett or afferyd by the sayd wardens for the tyme beinge w<sup>th</sup> the sayd three men or two of them at the least shalbe as good and effectuall as yf the same should be and were presented by twelve of the same arte or occupaçon.

And that it shalbe lawfull to the same occupaçon upon reasonable cause from tyme to tyme to displace the sayd three men so elected or eny of them, and to place so many other in ther Steadd and rometh by the lyke eleçon as is aforesayd.

And that no master of the same arte shall take eny greater wages for his apprentys worke the fyrst yeare of his apprentishipp then is used to be payed for a coñon laborer.

And also that hensforth it shalbe lawfull for the sayd wardens w<sup>th</sup> the sayd thremen or wyth twoo of them to sett and affeere souche ffyne or amercyaments upon eny master of the same occupaçon as well for takinge of contrary and excesse wages as also for eny defaulte of workemanshipp of his sayd apprentys or Jorneyman And also upon ther othe to allow and gyve souche due recompence to the partye or partyes that shall have every defectyve worke done as to them shall seame to be worke agreable to the quantytye of the same offence.

And that all fines and fforfytures hereafter to be found or offered accordinge to the tenor of this present acte is to be levyed and employed in souch lyke manner and fforme as is alredy sett downe in the said acte of assembly for the occupaçon of masons made the xxiiij<sup>th</sup> daye of December in the xv<sup>th</sup> yeare of the Quenes Majesties reigne that now is.



TEMPORE ROBERTI RUG MAIORIS SECUNDO.

[October 10: in 4<sup>th</sup> of Edward VI. (1550)]

M<sup>d</sup> Q<sup>d</sup> die et anno supradictis Johes Godfrey Civis Nor<sup>m</sup> Mason venit &c Et irro<sup>m</sup> fecit quād Indenturā geren' dat in festo pentecostes a<sup>o</sup> r. r. Ed vi<sup>th</sup> quarto sigillo Willmi Bygott filij Johis Bygott de Reiffam in com Norff sigillat contineū convencōes viz: qd p'fatus Willm<sup>s</sup> posuit seipsū app'ntic p'fat Johi ad artific de Masons crafte ac ad oīa alia sciencia quib; coit; utitur a festo p'dto usq fine termini septem anōe extunc px sequē complendorū per que terminu p'dtus Johes concedit q<sup>d</sup> ipe docebit dem Willmu artific p'dcum oīb; &c debito modo castigando &c ac inveniet &c suffic victū ac oīa alia vite sue necessaria, Et p'dtus Wilts concedit q<sup>d</sup> ipe bene continue et fideliter serviet p'fato Johi in artific p'dco ac oīa alia ut appūtico &c Et p'dtus Johes concedit q<sup>d</sup> deliberet &c prefato Wilto in fine dēi termini duplic vestitu convenient pro dieb; festivis et opariis unū le hamer exe, unū le pikaxe, unū le trowell et unū plome rewle bone et suffic, Ac solvet p'fato Wilto in fine dēi tēri xxxiiij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup> &c.

In 1559 a "levall" is added to the instruments the master shall find the apprentice with.

TEMPORE RICARDI FLETCHER MAIORIS CIVITATIS NORWICO PRIMO.

[August 2: 1<sup>st</sup> Elizabeth. 1559]

M<sup>d</sup> Q<sup>d</sup> secundo die mensis Augusti Anno regni Elizabeth modo Regine Anglie &c primo Michael Knott citezen of Norwich Rowemason inrollith an Indenture dated the xvj<sup>th</sup> daye of february in the first yeare of the reigne of the Quenys highnes aforesayed Sealed by Thomas Knott the sonne of Hañond Knotte of Catton in the county of Norff: husbondman wherby the sayd Thomas hath put him selfe apprentyce to the sayed Michael Knott unto Rowmasons crafte and w<sup>th</sup> him to dwell tarry and abyde from the feaste of all Seynts last past before the date hereof untill thend & tearme of Seaven yeares from thense next folowinge and fully to be complete By all whiche sayed tearme the sayed Thomas Knotte grauntith by thes presents the sayed Michael Knott as his M<sup>r</sup> well and faythfully to serve &c And the sayed Michael Knotte grantith by thes presents the sayed Thomas Knott his apprentyce in the sayed crafte whichē he useth after the man' that he maye teachē and enformē or cause to be taught and enformed &c and in dew man' to chastyce him findinge unto his sayed apprentyce meate drynke lynnē wollen &c Allso the sayede Michael Knote further grauntith to teache the sayed Thomas Knott to pley in and uppon the vyoll vyoletts and harpe as allso to synge playne songe & pryksonge at his owne proper costs and charges w<sup>th</sup>in the foresayed tearme And to paye & delyv' or cause to be payed and delyv'd unto the sayed Thomas at thend of the foresayd tearme iiij<sup>li</sup> a suffycient vyoll, a vyolet and a harpe one trowell on plumbe rewle on handaxe on square and doble apparell &c in wollen & lynnē &c



NOTES FROM A BOOK OF FREEMENS INDENTURES ENROLLMENTS  
BELONGING TO THE CITY OF NORWICH.

1558.

M<sup>o</sup> q<sup>d</sup> decimo die Januarij Anno Regni Elizabeth Regine primo Johannes Walpole civis Norwici Mason Irrotulari fecit quandam Indentur' gerentem Dat' in festo Annūciacōis B<sup>e</sup> Marie virginis Annis regnorum Philippi et Marie Regis et Regine quarto et quinto Sigillo Ricardi Cowper filij Johis Cowper nup de Barton defunct Sigillat Per quam predictus Ricūs scripsit posuit in apprenticiū prefat. Johi Walpole et assignatis suis ad artibz suū de Masons crafte erudiend' et eum eodem Johe commoratur a festo predicto usq. finem termini septem annos p; sequē et plenarie complend p quem quidem terminū p'dictus Johes concedit docere dictū Ricūm artif. predictum debito modo eum castigando ac etiam Inveniet dicto Ricō sufficieñ victum vestitū ac omia alia vite sue necessaria tam egrotudine quam in sanitate durante toto termino predicto Et p'dictus Ricūs concedit qd ipē serviet prefato Johi et assignatis suis in artificio predicto p totum terminum predictum et faciet omnes alias convēciōēs put decēt &c. Et p'dictus Johes concedit qd ipē solvet p'fato Ricō ad finem dicti termini xxvj<sup>s</sup> viij<sup>d</sup> ac etiam dabit prefato Ricō duplicem vestitum ac etiam hec Instrumenta sequēcia videlicet:—a hañeraxe a trowell a plomerewle & a levall &c.

16 December in 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Queen Mary, 1554.

Robert Ryngwood of Norwich Rowmason enrolls an Indenture dated 6<sup>th</sup> Sept<sup>r</sup> in 1<sup>st</sup> of Queen Mary whereby William Tonny son of Edward Tonny of Morley puts himself apprentice to Ryngwood for 7 years: Ryngwood to find him meat & drink & teach him his craft & at end of his term to give him double apparell & a brykex, a hañex, a trowell & a pykex and xxxij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup> in money.

22<sup>nd</sup> Febr<sup>y</sup>. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Elizabeth, 1560

John Godfrey citizen of Norwich enrolls an Indenture dated 2 August in 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Elizabeth whereby Jervase Forman, son of Henry Forman, late of Norton, binds himself apprentice to s<sup>d</sup> Godfrey for 8 years to learn a masons craft: Godfrey to find him at the end of his time "a plome rule, a Trowell, a hañerex and xxx<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup> & double apparell."

22<sup>nd</sup> Febr<sup>y</sup> in the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Elizabeth. 1560

Bartylmew Bell of Norwich, Mason, enrolls an Indenture dated on the feast of S<sup>t</sup> James the Apostle in the 1<sup>st</sup> of Elizabeth whereby Nycholas Erle of Norwyche puts himself apprentice to s<sup>d</sup> Bell for 7 years—at the end of his time the apprentice to have one pykex one brykex, & one hañerex & xx<sup>s</sup> & double apparell.

On the same day s<sup>d</sup> Bartylmew Bell enrolls an Indenture dated on the feast of S<sup>t</sup>. John the Baptist in 2<sup>nd</sup> of Elizabeth by which Robert Stubbys of Norwyche binds himself for 7 years to s<sup>d</sup> Bell: at the end of w<sup>ch</sup> time Bell is to supply him with a Trowell, a hamer & a Brykax, a squyer, a levell and a hand pyck axe and xx<sup>s</sup> and double apparell.

9th July in the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Elizabeth 1560

Thomas Rysshebroke of Norwyche Roughemason, inrolls an Indenture dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 1560 whereby Robert Nycker son of Peter Nycker late of Crownethorpe deceased, puts himself apprentice to Rysshebroke for 7 years: he to give Nycker at the end of his time iiij<sup>℥</sup>, double apparell, also a bryck axe, one hañer axe, a bryck axe [repeated] and a trowell and also said Ryshebroke is to have half the revenues & profits of a tenement & appurtenances in Crownthorpe, belonging to said Nycker, during the said term only.